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Letter dated 1 September 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the concept paper for the Security Council summit on "Ensuring the Security Council's effective role in maintaining international peace and security", to take place on 23 September 2010 at the level of Heads of State and Government (see annex).

I should be grateful if the enclosed concept paper could be circulated as a document of the Security Council in respect of its consideration of the issue of maintenance of international peace and security.

(*Signed*) Ertuğrul **Apakan**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 1 September 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept paper on ensuring the Security Council's effective role in maintaining international peace and security

Proposal

1. Turkey will assume the Presidency of the Security Council for the month of September 2010. In this context, it is the intention of the Turkish Government to convene a meeting of the Council at the level of Heads of State and Government on the afternoon of Thursday, 23 September. The meeting will provide a unique opportunity to conduct a strategic review, at the highest political level, of the evolving international security environment and of the Council's growing role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

2. The meeting will be chaired by the President of the Republic of Turkey, Abdullah Gül, and formal letters of invitation will be extended to the members of the Council in August. It will be held in the "briefing" format, in which the Secretary-General is invited to make an initial presentation, followed by interventions by the members of the Council.

3. At the end of the meeting, which will be limited to two hours, the intention is to adopt a presidential statement (or declaration), the first draft of which will be circulated informally in mid-August.

Rationale

4. The United Nations was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Sixty-five years later, we live in a world of new and emerging threats to international peace and security that could not have been anticipated in 1945. Yet, the threat of violent conflict and the costs of war — to individuals, communities, States and regions — remain the core challenges facing the United Nations. As the body with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the world looks to the Security Council to act decisively to prevent conflict, protect populations and end wars and prevent them from recurring. It is therefore imperative that the Council constantly take a fresh look at the evolving international security environment and its implications for the United Nations and the Council itself.

5. The first such strategic reassessment took place nearly 20 years ago. Following the end of the cold war, the Council dramatically expanded the pace and scope of its activities, utilizing for the first time the full range of tools provided under the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, the first-ever summit meeting of the Security Council took place on 31 January 1992. In the Summit statement, the Council stressed the importance of strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations. The Council also invited the Secretary-General to present his analysis and recommendations to that effect, in particular with a view to enhancing the capacity of the Organization for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping.

6. The report of the Secretary-General in June 1992, entitled "An agenda for peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), presented a wide-ranging analysis of the changing security landscape and made several recommendations regarding the areas of action identified by the Security Council. Importantly, it also added a new concept to the lexicon, post-conflict peacebuilding, in an attempt to complete the circle of peace.

7. In 2010, as in 1992, the Council still depends on these core operational tools — preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding (itself a means of conflict prevention) — for addressing a widening spectrum of complex challenges to international peace and security. Over the past two decades, the United Nations has made considerable progress in refining and strengthening these individual tools. It has also come to appreciate the essentially political nature of these instruments. It is time, from a political perspective, to evaluate their collective and individual effectiveness in the face of changing circumstances, to review and reassess how the pieces fit together, and to identify measures to fill in the gaps and/or to sharpen these and other instruments as appropriate.

8. The rationale for holding another such broad strategic debate at the level of Heads of State and Government is thus compelling. Through face-to-face exchanges among the top decision makers, it will be possible both to identify the most acute challenges and dangers of the day and to chart how the United Nations might best help to steer change into peaceful courses.

9. In fact, it was long proposed to hold such meetings on a regular basis. Since 1992, however, only five summit meetings have been held. Just one of them, in 2000, took a broad overview of the international security environment and pledged to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in addressing each stage of conflict. Now, five years after the 2005 World Summit, a decade since the seminal report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (the Brahimi report, see A/55/305-S/2000/809), and almost two decades after the first Summit meeting of the Council, another such high-level meeting is needed to take stock and to look ahead. In so doing, Council members can reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. They can initiate a process of defining and articulating a bolder, more comprehensive and more forward-looking vision of the Council's role in the maintenance of international peace and security today and into the future.

Focus

10. As noted at the outset, it is proposed that the summit-level meeting of the Council focus on two sets of questions: one, how the international security environment is evolving, and two, what the implications of these changes are for the way the Council goes about fulfilling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In this context, we could also discuss to what degree did the reforms since 2000 (and in particular those of 2005) strengthen the United Nations, what was left unaddressed and where are the gaps.

11. We live in a world of new and evolving threats to international peace and security. The core threat that the United Nations was created to prevent — war between States — has been largely overtaken by regional and global security threats of unprecedented complexity, including intra-State armed conflict with regional dimensions, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and transnational organized crime. Besides, growing recognition of the linkages between security and development has given new prominence to the impact of poverty,

global economic crisis, infectious diseases and environmental degradation on the security environment. These challenges are unconstrained by borders, threaten human security as well as the security of States, and emanate from non-State actors as well as States. In an interconnected world, no country can insulate itself from these threats nor solve these challenges alone. They demand a strengthened United Nations and a renewed commitment to effective multilateral cooperation through the Security Council.

12. Given its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security, these developments compel in particular the Security Council to be more active, comprehensive and collaborative. Active in the sense that the Council must play a stronger role in addressing all threats and challenges affecting international peace and security; comprehensive in the sense that it should not confine itself only to peacekeeping, but pay even more attention to preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding, and do so in a coherent manner; and finally, collaborative in the sense that it must discharge its responsibilities in cooperation with its partners not only within the United Nations system, such as the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Economic and Social Council, but also with all other major stakeholders, in particular with the regional and subregional organizations and international financial institutions. The summit provides an opportunity for the Council to reaffirm its commitment in this direction and reinvigorate its efforts.

13. Several of the key pieces of such a process are already in place. Within the last year alone, the Council has addressed preventive diplomacy, transitions and exit strategies in peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding, as well as related reports from the Secretary-General. In this regard, the "New horizon" non-paper on peacekeeping[1] and recent reports on mediation and on peacebuilding in the immediate aftermath of conflict merit particular attention, as does the recent report of the co-facilitators on the review of the Peacebuilding Commission.

14. Likewise, the Council meetings, statements and resolutions on the rule of law, women and peace and security, children in armed conflict, protection of civilians in armed conflict, terrorism, nuclear proliferation and organized crime and trafficking have contributed to strengthening the Council's understanding of and preparedness to deal with new and evolving threats to international peace and security. Increased interaction and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations has also been high on the Council's agenda as evidenced by the meeting with several such key organizations in January, as well as the joint meeting between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in July.

15. There is thus an increasing convergence of views among the United Nations membership on the complex nature of the international security environment, as well as on the means to address emerging threats and challenges. However, the multilateral system still struggles to translate this broad accord into practical, effective and mutually reinforcing steps on the ground.

16. The summit meeting in September could thus be an opportunity to re-energize the whole process; provide a comprehensive political framework to integrate the ongoing processes; restore confidence in the ability of the United Nations to prevent

[1] United Nations, Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, "A new partnership agenda: charting a new horizon for UN peacekeeping" (New York, July 2009).

and resolve conflicts; reaffirm the Council's primary role in maintaining international peace and security; and recommit the Council to discharging this responsibility in cooperation with its partners.

Outcome

17. It has been almost two decades since the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, last tried to pull together these parallel but interrelated activities, to put the individual pieces of the puzzle in their rightful places, and thus to create a full and interactive picture of the international security environment and of the means available to the Council to address contemporary and emerging threats to international peace and security.

18. By providing a comprehensive political framework to integrate these processes and by clarifying its own role, the Council could reaffirm its will and ability to play a stronger role in the political settlement of disputes and in the implementation of peace processes. It could also stress the importance of sustained engagement with countries in conflict. A discussion of this nature could help shift the debate from exit strategies to integration among different elements and tasks of bringing peace to a country or region.

19. The presidential statement (or declaration) to be adopted at the end of the meeting could underscore the Council's resolve on these matters, while providing clearer guidance and a more integrated framework for United Nations efforts in preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. It could also be used to launch a process aimed at reviewing the progress made in the efforts of the United Nations to achieve peace and security in the twenty-first century, as well as the efficacy of its tools and institutional arrangements under the Charter to this end.